(c) Government's response and reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Malnutrition in the country

708. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, according to UNICEF, India is home to one in three of the world's malnourished children and nearly half of Indian children are undernourished compared with a quarter of those in Sub-Saharan Africa;

(b) if so, the details available with Government as on date;

(c) the steps so far taken by Government to curb the malnutrition among the children;

(d) whether Government have set any time-frame to completely eradicate the malnutrition among the boys and girls;

(e) if so, the details worked out so far; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY). (a) As per UNICEF report titled "Progress for Children, A Report Card on Nutrition, No.4, May, 2006", 39.04% of the underweight children under 5 years in the World are from India. In Sub-Saharan Africa, as per the Report, 28% of children are underweight.

(b) The National Level data on undernourishment among children is compiled through the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The latest data available from NFHS-2 (1998-99) on State-wise distribution of undernourished children upto three years is given in the Statement, (see below) The work relating to NFHS-3 is underway at present and findings are likely to be available by the end of the year.

(c) One of the major interventions of the Government to reduce malnutrition amongst children is Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme. By the end of IX Plan, 5652 Projects and 7.58 lakh Anganwadi Centres were sanctioned by the Government. Almost all these Projects and Anganwadi Centres have become operational resulting in increase of beneficiaries of supplementary nutrition from 415.08 lakh on 31.3.2004 to 546.31 lakh on 31.12.2005. Similarly, beneficiaries of Preschool education has gone up from 204.38 lakh to 237.64 lakh during the same period.

Some of the other steps taken in the recent past include:

- Expansion of the ICDS scheme.
- Doubling of financial norms for supplementary nutrition.
- Sharing of 50% cost of supplementary nutrition with the States/ UTs.

Apart from this, Government of India is implementing, through various Ministries/Departments, several programmes which, directly or indirectly, improve nutritional status of children. These programmes include:

(i) Reproductive and Child Health Programme, (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare);

(ii) National Nutritional Anemia Control Programme, (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare);

(iii) National Prophylaxis Programme against Blindness due to Vitamin-A, (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare);

(iv) National Iodine Deficiency Control Programme, (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare):

(v) Poverty Alleviation Programme, (Ministry of Rural Development);

(vi) National Programme for Nutritional support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meal Scheme), (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy);

(vii) Targeted Public Distribution System, (Department of Food & Consumer Affairs);

(viii) A Pilot project in 51 districts to provide free foodgrains to

undernourished adolescent girls and pregnant & nursing mothers, (Ministry of Women & Child Development);

(ix) National Rural Health Mission (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare).

(d) to (f) While no time-frame for complete eradication of malnutrition has been set, the goal set in the X Plan for reducing malnutrition amongst children, is to bring down prevalence of underweight children under 3 years from the current level of 47% to 40% and to reduce prevalence of severe under-nutrition in children in the 0-6 years age group by 50%. The Government is trying to achieve these goals through the ICDS Scheme and other Schemes listed above.

Statement

Nutritional status of children by State

Percentage of children under age 3 years classified as undernourished on three anthropometric indices of nutritional status, according to State, India, 1998-99

	Weight-for-age		Height-for-age		Weight-for-height	
State	Percentage below -3SD	Percentage below -2SD	Percentage below -3SD	Percentage below -2SD	Percentage below -3SD	Percentage below -2SD
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
India	18.0	47.0	23.0	45.5	2.8	15.5
North						
Delhi	10.1	34.7	18.0	36.8	4.1	12.5
Haryana	10.1	34.6	24.3	50.0	0.8	5.3
Himachal Pradesh	12.1	43.5	18.1	41.3	3.3	16.9
Jammu & Kashmir	8.3	34.5	17.3	38.8	1.2	11.8
Punjab	8.8	28.7	17.2	39.2	0.8	7.1
Rajasthan	20.8	50.6	29.0	52.0	1.9	11.7

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Central						
Madhya Pradesh	24.3	55.1	28.3	51.0	4.3	19.8
Uttar Pradesh	21.9	51.7	31.0	55.5	2.1	11.1
East						
Bihar	25.5	54.4	33.6	53.7	5.5	21.0
Orissa	20.7	54.4	17.6	44.0	3.9	24.3
West Bengal	16.3	48.7	19.2	41.5	1.6	13.6
Northeast						
Arunachal Pradesh	7.8	24.3	11.9	26.5	2.0	7.9
Assam	13.3	36.0	33.7	50.2	3.3	13.3
Manipur	5.3	27.5	11.2	31.3	1.8	8.2
Meghalaya	11.3	37.9	24.5	44.9	1.0	13.3
Mizoram	5.0	27.7	13.9	34.6	2.8	10.2
Nagaland	7.4	24.1	11.7	33.0	2.4	10.4
Sikkim	4.2	20.6	9.7	31.7	0.8	4.8
West						
Goa	4.7	28.6	4.8	18.1	0.7	13.1
Gujarat	16.2	45.1	23.3	43.6	2.4	16.2
Maharashtra	17.6	49.6	14.1	39.9	2.5	21.2
South						
Andhra Pradesh	10.3	37.7	14.2	38.6	1.6	9.1
Karnataka	16.5	43.9	15.9	36.6	3.9	20.0
Kerala	4.7	26.9	7.3	21.9	0.7	11.1
Tamil Nadu	10.6	36.7	12.0	29.4	3.8	19.9

Note: Each index is expressed in standard deviation units (SD) from the median of the International Reference Population.

[1]Includes children who are below -3 SO from the International Reference Population median.